been lodged with the police with regard to missing Munal of Hookah. The art objects were insured on 'wall to wall asis and action is in progress to settle insurance claims. Orders have also been conveyed to the National Museum to enquire into the circumstances leading to the damages and fix responsibility.

Taxi and scooter fares

907. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the minimum and per kilometer charges for hiring the taxies and the auto-scooters in Delhi; and

(b) whether the current rate-charts are available with the drivers of these vehicles and, if not, what steps government are taking to enforce it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) The minimum fares for auto rickshaws are Rs. 2.30 for first 1.6 K.M. and Rs. 1.15 for every subsequent kilometer. For taxi the minimum fare is Rs. 3.00 for the first K.M. and Rs. 2.30 for every subsequent K.M. These rates were made applicable w.e.f. 10-3-1986.

(b) Yes, Sir. As per permit conditions, the operator has always to carry the rate chart for production on demand. These charts were also got printed in leading newspapers.

Hockey team's debacle at Seoul Asiad and World Cup

908. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to probe the reasons for the Indian Hockey team's debacle in the Seoul Asian Games and also in the World Cup held recently;

(b) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Indian team gave a very miserable performance due to lack of adequate encouragement and selection of players; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to encourage the players and make selection only of the deserving players?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) A detailed report on various aspects of the participation of the Indian contingent in the X Asian Games including hockey and performance of the Indian Hockey team in the World Cup is expected to be received from the Indian Olympic Association and Indian Hockey Federation respectively. On receipt of these reports, measures required to be taken for the improvement of the performance of the Indian Hockey team in international tournaments in the future will be considered in depth by Government in consultation with experts in the field.

(c) A numer of steps were taken to give encouragement to players. These were in the nature of providing financial and technical facilities for the coaching and training of Indian Hockey team prior to its participation in international tournaments. The facilities provided included meeting expenditure on the running of coaching camps, provision of diet money during the coaching camps making available for the camps trained coaches wherever required by the federation and holding of coaching camps. Exposure to international competition was also encouraged by meeting air passage cost both ways in respect of the players of the national teams going for participation in international

tournaments abroad. Special awards by way of cash incentives for teams winning gold, silver and bronze medals were announced in advance. The performance of the Indian Hockey team, however, in the X Asian Games and the World Hockey Cup was below expectations.

(d) The measures required to be taken will depend on the consideration of the matter in reply to (a) & (b) above.

Blindness among children due to lack of vitamin A

909. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made to ascertain the number of children who are suffering from blindness due to lack of Vitamin A in the country; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken/propose to take to provide extra care to children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Country wide detailed study on the actual incidence of blindness due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency has not been carried out. However, studies carried out at the National Institute of Nutrition had revealed that 1 in 10,000 (one in ten thousand) pre-school children develop corneal damage due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency resulting in either partial or total blindness. It is estimated that about 70 to 80 thousand children between the ages of 1 and 5 years can go blind per year, due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency.

(b) There is a scheme of prophylaxis against blindness due to Vitamin A deficiency under which Vitamin A solution is administered to children in the age group of 1—5 years. At present 58 per cent of children at risk are covered. This coverage is being increased from year to year.

Passenger amenities at airports in the North-Eastern region

910. SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in most of the airports in North-Eastern region proper passenger amenities are not available;

(b) if so, what steps Government proposes to take to remedy the situation; and

(c) whether National Airport Authority has prepared a time bound programme for this purpose and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Minimum passenger amenities are provided at all the operational airports. However, improvement of passenger amenities is a continuous process and is taken up in keeping with the availability of financial resources.

Training Institute for port workers in Bombay

911. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister for SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the provision made for the proposed Training Institute for Port workers in the Bombay Port Trust;

(b) the time by when the institute is likely to start functioning; and

(c) whether the provision made is sufficient for the Institute if not, what steps are being taken to complete this Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE